Naming a Child or a Person

Very elaborate rules are given in the Gṛhya-sūtras about naming a child. In this paper I propose to compare those rules with the practices deducible from the Vedic literature as also to discuss how persons were named in India from very ancient times.

In the *Ṛgveda* (VIII. 80. 9) we read[1] 'when you give us a fourth name connected with the (the performance of) a sacrifice we long for it, immediately afterwards you, our lord, take us (forward or towards glory)'. Here is a clear reference to the fact that the performer of a *yajña* took a name indicative of that fact and that was his fourth name. Sāyaṇa explains these four names thus: one derived from the nakṣatra (at birth), the second a secret name, the third a publicly known one and the fourth an epithet like Somayāji (due to one's having performed a *Soma* sacrifice). Later works like the *Vaikhānasasmārta-sūtra*[2] (III. 19) prescribe that a man may assume a name after consecration of the sacred fires (such as *Agnicit*, *Vājapeyakṛt* etc.). In *Ṛv.* X. 54. 4 also there appears to be a reference to four names (though Sāyaṇa here takes *nāma* as meaning *śarīra* or *karma*). *Ṛv.*[3] IX. 75. 2 has 'The son has a third name which is unknown to the parents and which is in the bright parts of the heaven.' This is a reference to the three names of a person, two being his ordinary name and his nakṣatra name and the third (which his parents could not foresee) was given for his performance of a sacrifice.[4] In the *Ṛv.*

1 तुरीयं नाम यज्ञियं यदाकरस्तदुश्मसि । आदित्यपतिर्न ओहसे । ऋ. VIII. 80. 9

2 अग्न्याधानात्परमाहिताग्न्यादि स्वकर्मान्तं प्रकाशं नाम भवेत् । वैखानसस्मार्तसूत्र III 19.

3 दधाति पुत्रः पित्रोरपीच्यं नाम तृतीयमधि रोचने दिवः । ऋ. IX. 75. 2.

4 Vide बौधायनगृह्यशेषसूत्र I. 11. 4-8. नामास्मै दधाति नक्षत्रनामधेयेन । द्वितीयमस्य नामधेयं गुह्यमस्यान्यदभिवादनीयमोपनयनकालान्मातापितरौ संविदितौ भवतः । ...सोमयाजी तृतीयं नाम कुर्वंतेति विज्ञायते ॥

frequent reference is made to the secret name of a person. 'He does know that secret and concealed name given to these cows'[5] (*Rv.* IX. 87. 3). Similarly in *Rv.* X. 55. 1-2 there is a reference to a secret name (*guhyam nāma*). In the *Ś. Br.*, after recommending the consecration of fires (*agnyādhāna*) on the constellation of Falgunīs it is said that they are the nakṣatras presided over by Indra, that Arjuna is the secret name (*guhya-nāma*) of Indra and that the Falgunīs are called Arjunīs in an indirect (or esoteric) way. The *Br. Up.* (VI. 4. 26) says that the father on the birth of his son bestows on him a name with the words 'thou art Veda' and that name becomes the boy's secret name.

In the *Tai. S.* (VI. 3. 1.) it is said[7] 'therefore a brāhmaṇa who has two names prospers (or is successful).' In another place the *Tai. S.* (I. 5. 10. 1) has 'Oh Fire Jātavedas, that first name which my father and mother bestowed on me aforetime, bear it until my return. Oh fire, I shall bear thy name.'[8] This verse occurs with several variations in other saṃhitās[9] and it is quoted in several sūtras also. In this way reverence was paid to the Āhavaniya fire by one who was about to go on a journey.

In the Vedic literature we come across some cases of three names for the same person. In *Rv.* V. 33. 8 we find 'Traṣadasyu Paurukutsya Gairikṣita', the first being his ordinary name, the second a derivative from Purukutsa (his father's name) and the last

5 स चिद्विवेद निहितं यदासामपीच्यं गुह्यं नाम गोनाम्। ऋ. IX 87. 3.

6 अर्जुनो ह वै नामेन्द्रो यदस्य गुह्यं नामार्जुन्यो वै नामैतास्ता एतत्परोक्षमाचक्षते फल्गुन्य इति। शतपथ II. 1. 2. 11.

7 तस्माद् द्विनामा ब्राह्मणोर्धुकः। तै. सं. VI. 3.1. This sentence is quoted in several Gṛhya sūtras.

8 मम नाम प्रथमं जातवेदः पिता माता च दधतुर्यदग्ने।
तत्त्वं बिभृहि पुनरा मदैतोस्त्वाहं नाम बिभराणयग्ने॥ तै० सं. I 5. 10 1

9 E.g., the काठकसंहिता (VII. 3) reads '...दधतुर्नर्वग्रे।
तत्त्वं गोपाया पुनर्ददे तेे वयं विभराम तव नाम॥'

derived from Girikṣita (a gotra). From *Ṛv.* VII. 33. 10-13 it seems to follow that Agastya was also called Māna and Maitrāvaruṇa (vide also I. 117. 11). In the *Ait. Br.* (40. 5) a king named Sutvan Kairiśi Bhārgāyaṇa is mentioned, where the second name is derived from his father's name and the third is a gotra name. In the same *Brāhmaṇa* (33.5) Śunaḥśepa Ājīgarti (son of Ajīgarta) is addressed as Āṅgirasa (a gotra name). Hariścandra (a king) is spoken of (in *Ait. Br.* 33. 1) as Vaidhasa (son of Vedhas) and Aikṣvāka (born in Ikṣvāku's family). In the *Tāṇḍya Br.* (XIII. 3. 12) we hear of a king Tyaruṇa Traidhātva (son of Tridhātu) Aikṣvāka (descendant of Ikṣvāku). In the *Śatapatha* (XIII. 5. 4. 1.) Indrota Daivāpa (son of Devāpi) Śaunaka is said to have been the priest of Janamejaya at the latter's horse sacrifice. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (V. 3. 1 and 7) Śvetaketu Āruṇeya (son of Āruṇi and grandson of Aruṇa) is styled Gautama. In the same Upaniṣad both Indradyumna Bhāllaveya and Buḍila Āśvatarāśvi are addressed as Vaiyāghrapadya (a gotra name) by king Aśvapati Kaikeya (*Chā.* V. 14. 1 and V. 16. 1.). In the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* (I. 1. 1) Naciketas is said to be Vājaśravasa's son and in I. 1. 11 his father's name is given as Auddālaki Āruṇi and Naciketas himself is addressed by Yama as Gautama (a gotra name) in II. 5. 6. This practice of giving three names is in accordance with the recommendation of the *Śatapatha Br.* (VI. 1. 3. 9) 'therefore when a son is born (the father) should bestow on him a name, thereby he (the father) drives away the evil (pāpman) that might attach to the boy; (the father gives) even a second, even a third (name)'.[10] The same *Brāhmaṇa* has in another place 'therefore a brāhmaṇa when he does not prosper should give to himself a second name; he who knowing thus bestows upon himself a second

10 तस्मात्पुत्रस्य जातस्य नाम कुर्यात्पाप्मानमेवास्य तदपहन्त्यपि द्वितीयमपि तृतीयम्। शतपथ VI. 1. 3. 9.

name does indeed prosper (or succeed)'.[11] In the *Drāhyāyaṇa Śrauta sūtra* (I. 3. 9) reference is made to the fact that a *Yajamāna* (sacrificer) may have three names and that they were all to be recited at certain rites.[12]

Usually however a person is referred to in Vedic literature by two names. Sometimes a person is mentioned by his own name and a gotra name e.g. we have Medhyātithi Kāṇva (*Ṛv.* VIII. 2. 40), Hiraṇyastūpa Āṅgirasa (*Ṛv.* X. 149. 5), Vatsapri Bhālandana (*Tai. S.* V. 2. 1. 6), Bālāki Gārgya (*Bṛ. Up.* II. 1. 1), Baka Dālbhya (*Chā. Up.* I. 2. 13), Cyavana Bhārgava (*Ait. Br.* 39. 7), Kabandhi Kātyāyana (*Praśna Up.* I. 1.), Patañcala Kāpya (*Br. Up.* III. 7. 1). In other cases a person is referred to by his name and another derived from a country or locality e.g. Kaśu Caidya (*Ṛv.* VIII. 5. 37), Bhīma Vaidarbha (*Ait. Br.* 35. 8), Durmukha Pāñcāla (*Ait. Br.* 39. 23) Janaka Vaideha (*Br. Up.* III. 1. 1), Ajātaśatru Kāśya (*Br. Up.* II. 1. 1.), Bhārgava Vaidarbhi (*Praśna* I. 1), Hiraṇyanābha Kauśalya (*Praśna* VI. 1). In some cases a matronymic is added to a person's name e.g. we have Dīrghatamā Māmateya (son of Mamatā, in *Ṛv.* I. 158. 6), Kutsa Ārjuneya (son of Arjuni, in *Ṛv.* IV. 26. 1, VII. 19. 2, VIII. 1. 11), Kakṣivat Auśija (son of Uśik, in *Ṛv.* I. 18. 1 and *Vāj. S.* III. 28), Prahlāda Kāyādhava (son of Kayādhū, in *Tai. Br.* I. 5. 10. 7), Mahidāsa Aitareya (son of Itarā, in *Chā.* III. 16. 7). This practice of mentioning a man by his mother's own name or her gotra name (derived from her father's gotra) was continued till later times, as will be shown hereafter. In the *vaṃśa*

11 तस्माद् ब्राह्मणोऽनृध्यमाने द्वितीयं नाम कुर्वीत राध्नोति हैव य एवं विद्वान् द्वितीयं नाम कुरुते। शतपथ III. 6. 2. 24.

12 प्रत्येकं गृह्णीयाद्यजमाननामधेयानि यानि स्युः। द्राह्यायणश्रौत I. 3. 9. on which one interpretation in the *Dhanvibhāṣya* is that they are अभिवादनीय, व्यावहारिक and नक्षत्रनाम।

added at the end of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, we have about forty names of sages that are matronymic.

The most usual method of referring to a person even in the *Ṛgveda* is to give his name along with another epithet derived from his father's name. A few examples may be given. Ambarīṣa, Ṛjrāśva, Sahadeva and Surādhas are all called Vārsāgira (sons of Vṛṣāgir, *Ṛv.* I. 100. 17). King Sudās is called Paijavana (son of Pijavana) and in the same verse he is said to have been the grandson (naptṛ) of Devavat (*Ṛv.* VII. 18. 22). We have in the *Ṛgveda* itself such names as Trita Vaibhūvasa (son of Vibhūvas *Ṛv.* X. 46. 3), Trita Āptya (*Ṛv.* VIII. 12. 16), Dadhyaṅ Ātharvaṇa (*Ṛv.* I. 116. 12), Purumiḷha Vaidadaśvi (*Ṛv.* V. 61. 10), Pṛthuśravas Kānīta (son of Kanīta, *Ṛv.* VIII. 21. 24), Devāpi Ārṣṭiṣeṇa (son of Ṛṣṭiṣeṇa. *Ṛv.* X. 98. 5, 6 and 8), Trasadasyu Paurukutsi or Paurukutsya (son of Purukutsa, *Ṛv.* VII. 19. 3 and VIII. 19. 36), Ṛjiśvan Vaidathina (son of Vidathin, *Ṛv.* IV. 16. 13), Srñjaya Daivavāta (*Ṛv.* IV. 15. 4), Somaka Sāhadevya (*Ṛv.* IV. 15. 9). A few examples from other Vedic works may also be cited; Śaṃyu Bārhaspatya (*Tai. S.* II. 6. 10), Vasiṣṭha Sātyahavya (*Tai. S.* VI. 6. 2. 2-3 and *Ait. Br.* 40. 1), Bhṛgu Vāruṇi (*Ait. Br.* 13. 10 and *Tai. Up.* III. 1), Bharata Dauṣsanti (*Śatapatha* XIII. 5. 4. 11, *Ait. Br.* 39. 9), Kavaṣa Ailūṣa (*Ait Br.* VIII. 1), Nābhānediṣṭha Mānava (*Ait. Br.* 22. 9), Brahmadatta Caikitāneya (son of Caikitāna and grandson of Cikitāna, *Br. Up* I. 3. 24), Satyakāma Śaibya (*Praśna Up.* I. 1).

We find that sometimes the same speaker is referred to by his own name, sometimes by his gotra name and sometimes by a name which is patronymic. For example, Naciketas is addressed as Naciketas (in *Kaṭha Up.* I. 1. 19. 21, 24, I. 2. 3 etc.) and sometimes as Gautama (II. 4. 15, II. 5. 6). Śvetaketu Āruṇeya is throughout addressed as Gautama by Pravāhaṇa Jaivali (*Chā.* V. 3ff.).

In some of the Gṛhyasūtras the ceremony of giving a name to the child is included in the Jātakarma rite following apparently the

passage of the *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* quoted above (note 10). For example the *Āśvalāyana Gṛ. S.* (I. 13 Trivandrum ed.)[13] says 'when a son has been born (the father) should, before other people touch him, give him to eat from a golden vessel clarified butter and honey in which gold has been rubbed . . . . And let (them) give the son a name beginning with a sonant, with a semivowel in it, with a *visarga* at its end, consisting of two syllables or four syllables; of two syllables if he is desirous of firm position, of four syllables if he is desirous of spiritual glory; but in every case with an even number of letters for men, an uneven for women. And let (the father) thoughtfully find out (for the son) a name to be used at respectful salutation (at the time of Upanayana); that (name) his mother and father alone should know till his Upanayana'. This shows that the boy was to have a public name (*vyāvahārika*) and an *abhivādanīya* name, which was to be kept secret by his parents and to be used at the time of respectfully bowing to his teacher at the Upanayana. Even now boys at the time of Upanayana have a name communicated to them which they are to keep secret. The *Āpastamba-gṛhya-sūtra*[14] similarly prescribes that on the birth of a son the father indicates the

13 कुमारं जातं पुरान्यैरालम्भात सर्पिर्मधुनी हिरण्यनिकाषं हिरण्येन प्राशयेत् ।...नाम चास्मै दधुः । घोषवदाद्यन्तरन्तःस्थमभिनिष्ठानान्तं द्व्यक्षरं चतुरक्षरं वा । द्व्यक्षरं प्रतिष्ठाकामश्चतुरक्षरं ब्रह्मवर्चसकामः । युग्मानि त्वेव पुंसाम् । अभिवादनीयं च समीक्षेत तन्मातापितरौ विद्यातामोपनयनात् । आश्व० गृ० सू० I 13. 1 and I. 13 4-9. Sonants (ghoṣa) are the 3rd, 4th, 5th letters of the five classes from कवर्ग to पवर्ग, य, र, ल, व and ह, पाणिनि (VIII. 3. 86) derives अभिनिष्ठान.

14 जातं वाग्यतेऽभिमृश्य...जापः । नक्षत्रनाम च निर्दिशति । तद्रहस्यं भवति ।... दशम्यामुत्थितायां स्नातायां पुत्रस्य नाम दधाति पिता मातेति । द्व्यक्षरं चतुरक्षरं वा नामपूर्वमाख्यातोत्तरं दीर्घाभिनिष्ठानान्तं घोषवदाद्यन्तरन्तःस्थम् । अपि वा यस्मिन्स्वित्युपसर्गः स्यात्तद्धि प्रतिष्ठितमिति ब्राह्मणम् । अयुजाक्षरं कुमार्याः । आप० गृ० VI. 15. 1-3 and 8-11 Such names with two or four syllables would be गोघ्नीः, हिरण्यदाः, द्रविणोदाः, सुदर्शनः ।

nakṣatra name which is kept secret and that 'on the 10th day after the mother has risen (from the lying-in chamber) and bathed, the father and the mother give a name to the son, which is of two syllables or four syllables, the first part being a noun, the latter part a verb; it should have a long vowel in the middle, or it should contain the *upasarga* 'su', since such a name has a firm basis; thus it is said in a Brāhmaṇa. A girl's name should have an odd number of syllables.' The *Gobhila-gṛhyasūtra*[15] also prescribes the giving of a secret name at the time of Jātakarma and says that the Nāmakaraṇa is to be performed after the passing of ten nights, a hundred nights or a year from birth.[16] It then prescribes that the name to be given on that day must be a word ending in a *kṛt* termination and must not be *taddhita*, the other requirements are the same except that the names of girls were to end in the syllable 'dā'. The *Gobhilagṛhya*[17] (II. 10. 22-25) says that in the Upanayana rite the teacher asks the student what his name is and adds 'the teacher settles for him a name which he is to employ when bowing at the feet of his teacher, (a name) derived from a deity or a nakṣatra or also from his gotra, according to some teachers'. We know from the story of Satyakāma Jābāla that his teacher asked him what his gotra was (*Chāndogya* IV. 4. 4). It will be noted that in the *Chāndogya* (V. 14. 1, V. 16. 1, V. 17. 1 etc.), *Bṛ. Up.* (III. 7, 2), *Kauṣītaki Up.* (1. 17) when a person approaches another for knowledge, the latter very frequently addresses him by his gotra name such

15 पुमानयं जनिष्यतेऽसौ नामेति नामधेयं गृह्णाति। यत्तद् गुह्यमेव भवति। गोभिलीय गृह्य II. 7. 15-16.

16 जननादृशरात्रे व्युष्टे शतरात्रे संवत्सरे वा नामधेयकरणम्। आहस्पत्यं मासं प्रविशासाविति नन्ते च मन्तस्य घोषवदा...निष्ठानान्तं कृतं नाम दध्यात्। एतदतद्धितम्। अयुग्दान्तं स्त्रीणाम्। गोभिलीय II 8. 8. and 14-16.

17 को नामासीति नामधेयं पृच्छति तस्याचार्यः। अभिवादनीयं नाम कल्पयित्वा देवताश्रयं नक्षत्राश्रयं वा। गोत्राश्रयमप्येके। गोभिलीयगृह्य II. 10. 21-25.

as Vaiyaghrapadya, Gautama etc. The *Śāṅkhāyana gṛhya-sutra*[18] (I. 24) first prescribes the giving of a name at the time of Jātakarma almost in the same words as the *Gobhilagṛhya* (but adds that the name may be of six syllables also) and proceeds 'that name only his father and his mother should know. On the tenth day a name be given common use which is pleasing to the brāhmaṇas'. The *Khādira gṛhya*[19] (II. 2. 30-31, II. 3. 6 and 10-12) prescribes the giving of a secret name immediately on birth, of another name after ten nights, a hundred nights or a year from birth, but adds no further details. The *Khādira gṛhya*[20] (II. 4. 12) further lays down that in the Upanayana rites "the student who has been asked by the teacher 'what is thy name' should declare a name derived from (the name of) a deity or a nakṣatra, which he is to use while bowing to his teacher with the words 'I am so and so'". This follows the custom which is referred to even in the *Br. Up.* (I. 4. 1), "Therefore even when a person is called he first says 'here am I' and then pronounces his name whatever it may be." The *Hiraṇyakeśigṛhya-sūtra* (II. 4. 10-15) is silent about giving a name in Jātakarma and prescribes that on the twelfth day after the birth of a child a name is to be given to a child (and the details are the same as in *Āpastambagṛhya*) and adds "let the father and the mother pronounce that name first. For it is understood 'my name first O Jātavedas' (*vide* note 8). He should give him two names. For it is known 'therefore a brāhmaṇa who

18 अथ जातकर्म ।...अमाविति नामास्य दधाति घोषवत्.....चतुरक्षरं वापि वा षडक्षरं कृतं कुर्यान्न तद्धितम् । तदस्य पिता माता च विद्याताम् । दशम्यां व्यावहारिकं ब्राह्मणजुष्टम् । शाङ्खायन (कौषीतकि) गृह्य I. 24.

19 अमाविति नाम दध्यात् । तद्गुह्यम् । खादिरगृह्य II. 2. 31-32. The com. adds नामापरिज्ञाने अभिचाराद्यसिद्धिः फलम् ।

20 को नामासीत्युक्तो देवताश्रयं नक्षत्राश्रयं वाभिवादनीयं नाम ब्रूयादसावस्मीति । खादिरगृह्य II. 4. 12; the com. रुद्रस्कन्द exemplifies the names derived from नक्षत्रs (such as कार्त्तिकेय, रौहिणेय, चैत्र) and the names derived from deities presiding over नक्षत्रs (such as आश्विन, याम्य, आग्नेय, मैत्र).

has two names has success' (note 7). The second name should be a nakṣatra name. The one name should be secret; by the other they should call him. He gets a third name; thus it is known (from the Vedas)".[21] The *Hiraṇyakeśi-gṛhya* tells us that in the Upanayana rite the teacher asks the student his name and the student pronounces his name with the word 'This' and with the words 'Hail, O Savitṛ etc.' he mentions two names (I. 5. 4-6).[22] The commentator explains that these two are his vyāvahārika name and his nakṣatra name. The *Bhāradvāja-gṛhya* I. 26 (ed. by Salomons) speaks of giving a name only in Nāmakaraṇa and closely follows the *Hiraṇyakeśi-gṛhya*. The *Pāraskaragṛhyasūtra* (I. 17) speaks of giving a name only on the tenth day after birth, specifies the details as in *Gobhila-gṛhya* (II. 8. 14) and adds "with an uneven number of syllables ending in 'ā', with a Taddhita suffix, in the case of a girl. The name of a brāhmaṇa (should end in) *śarman*,[23] that of a Kṣatriya in *varman*, that of a Vaiśya in *gupta*." It will be noticed that here for the first time we come across the words śarman, varman and gupta added at the end of the names of individuals respectively belonging to the three varṇas. The *Mānavagṛhyasūtra*[24] (I. 18. 1-2) says "on the tenth night (after birth) he (the father) should give

21 पुत्रस्य नाम दध्यात्। द्व्यक्षरं...प्रतिष्ठितमिति विज्ञायते। पिता मातेत्यग्रे भिव्याहरेयाताम्। विज्ञायते च मम नाम प्रथमं जातवेद इति। द्वे नामनी कुर्यात्। विज्ञायते च तस्माद् द्विनामा ब्राह्मणोर्धुक इति। नक्षत्रनाम द्वितीयं स्यादन्यतरद्गुह्यं स्यात्। अन्यतरेणैनमामन्त्रयीरन्। सोमयाजी तृतीयं नाम कुर्वीतेति विज्ञायते। हिरण्यकेशिगृह्य II. 4. 10-15.

22 तं पृच्छति को नामासीति। असौ इत्याचष्टे यथानामा भवति। स्वस्ति देव सवितरहमनेनामुनोद्दचमशीय इति नामनी गृह्णाति। हिरण्यकेशिगृह्य I. 5. 3-6.

23 दशम्यामुत्थाप्य.....पिता नाम करोति द्व्यक्षरं चतुरक्षरं वा घोष...भिनिष्ठानं कृतं कुर्यान्न तद्धितम्। शर्म ब्राह्मणस्य वर्म क्षत्रियस्य गुप्तेति वैश्यस्य। पारस्करगृह्य I. 17.

24 दशम्यां रात्र्यां पुत्रस्य नाम दध्यात्। घोषव...स्थं द्व्यक्षरं चतुरक्षरं वा। त्र्यक्षरं दान्तं कुमारीणाम्। तेनाभिवादयितुं त्र्यक्षा पितुर्नामधेयम्। यशस्यं नामधेयं देवताश्रयं नक्षत्राश्रय देवतायाश्च प्रत्यक्षं प्रतिषिद्धम्। मानवगृह्य I. 18. 1-2.

a name to the son, which should have a sonant at the beginning and a semi-vowel in the middle, a name of two syllables or four: (the names) of girls should have three syllables and end in '*dā*,' in order that he may bow at the feet (of his teacher), (a name should be given) avoiding the father's (own) name; a name derived from a deity or nakṣatra tends to fame; but it is forbidden to give the name of a deity directly" (i.e. one may be called Rudradatta but not Rudra). The *Vārāhagṛhya*[25] after stating the usual rules about the names of males on the 10th day after birth adds "the father's name should be avoided, or the son should have a name derived from a nakṣatra or a deity or (any other) desirable one; but a brāhmaṇa should have two names; in this way the name of a girl should end in 'ā' and should have an 'a' intercepted, should have an odd number of syllables, and should not be the name of a river, a nakṣatra, the moon, the sun, the god Pūṣan, or it should not be a name ending in 'dattā' or 'rakṣitā' preceded by the name of a god". Manu also recommends that one should not marry a girl who bears a name which is the name of a nakṣatra, a tree, a river (III.9). The same gṛhyasūtra (5) refers to the abhivādanīya name in Upanayana. The *Baudhāyana gṛhyasūtra*[26] (II. 1. 23-31) refers only to the giving of a name on the 10th or 12th day after birth, gives almost the same details as to the letters of the name (but allows even six or eight syllables) as in *Āp. Gṛ.* and adds 'the name should show that the child is a descendant of a ṛṣi or connected with a deity or he should have one out of the names of the father's ancestors'. The *Baudhāyanīya Gṛhyaśesa-*

25 एवमेव दशम्यां कृत्वा पिता माता च पुत्रस्य नाम दध्याताम्। घोष...ष्ठानान्तं कृतं न तद्धितं द्व्यक्षरं चतुरक्षरं वा त्र्यक्षरपितृनामधेयान्नक्षत्रदेवतेष्टनामानो वा। द्विनामा तु ब्राह्मणो नामैवं कन्याया अकारव्यवधानमाकारान्तमयुग्माक्षरं नदीनक्षत्रचन्द्रसूर्यपूषादेवदत्तरक्षितावर्जम्। वाराहगृह्य 2.

26 नामास्मै दधाति।...षडक्षरमष्टाक्षरं वा।...प्रतिष्ठितमिति विज्ञायते। ऋष्यनूकं देवतानूकं वा। यथैवैषां पूर्वपुरुषाणां नामानि स्युः। अयुगक्षरं कुमार्याः। अमुष्मै स्वस्तीति। बौ. गृ II. 1. 24-31.

sūtra[27] (I. 11. 4-18) gives more details about Nāmakaraṇa on the 10th or 12th day after birth. It says "he bestows on the boy a name by means of a nakṣatra name, he has another and a second name which is used at the time of bowing down (abhivādanīya), which only his father and mother are acquainted with till (the boy's) upanayana. ..... It is known that one who performs a Soma sacrifice should take a third name. To a girl (one should give) a name consisting of an odd number of syllables and ending in a long vowel as Śri, Somyā. They also recite:—the name of a brāhmaṇa should end in śarman, of a Kṣatriya in 'varman', of a Vaiśya in 'gupta' and of a 'Śūdra' in 'bhṛtya' or 'dāsa' or it may only end in 'dāsa'..... In the case of the nakṣatras Rohiṇī, Mṛgaśirṣa, Maghā, Citrā, Jyeṣṭhā, Śravaṇa, Śatabhiṣak, Revati and Aśvayuk, the first vowel undergoes 'Vṛddhi'; and the name Rauhiṇa is given after the the nakṣatra Rohiṇī; others also (are similarly formed). In the case of Tiṣya, Aśleṣā, Hasta, Viśākhā, Anurādhā, Asāḍā, Śraviṣṭhā the name is the same as the original (nakṣatra) as in Tiṣya (from Tiṣya); the ohers (also yield the same names). In Phalguni the name of Phālguna" (results), etc. Saṅkha-Likhita as quoted in Aparārka prescribes Nāmakaraṇa on the tenth day after birth and add '(the father) or some other elder in the family should bestow on males a name containing four or two syllables having a sonant at the beginning and a semi-vowel in the middle, in the case of girls (a name) ending in 'ī'; if a name is bestowed in this way the family becomes pure.'[28]

27 Vide note 4 above for a portion. 'अयुगक्षरं कुमार्यै स्वस्तिश्रीसोम्येति दीर्घवर्णान्तम्। अथाप्युदाहरन्ति—शर्मान्तं ब्राह्मणस्य वर्मान्तं क्षत्रियस्य गुप्तान्तं वैश्यस्य भृत्यदासान्तं शूद्रस्य दासान्तमेव वा। अथ नक्षत्राणि रोहिणीमृगशीर्षमघाचित्राज्येष्ठाश्रवणशतभिषग्रेवत्याश्वयुक्तु प्रथमाक्षरवृद्धिः स्याद्रोहिण्यां रौहिणायेति। तथेतराणि। तिष्याश्लेषाहस्तविशाखानुराधाषाढाश्रविष्ठासु प्रकृतिवत्तिष्यायेति। तथेतराणि। फल्गुन्यां फाल्गुनायेति। बौ. गृ. शेषसूत्र I. 11. 9-18.

28 'अन्यो वा कुलवृद्धश्चतुरक्षरं द्व्यक्षरं घोष...न्तःस्थं पुंसामीकारान्तं स्त्रीणामेवं कृते नास्ति शुचि तत्कुलं भवति। अपरार्क p. 27.

The Mitākṣarā on Yājñavalkya 1.12 quotes a passage of Śaṅkha that the father should give a name connected with the family deity. Baijavāpa[29] as quoted by Aparārka says 'the father gives a name containing one, two, three, four syllables or more without any restriction, which (name) has a kṛt (termination) and is not a Taddhita; for a girl he gives (a name) ending in 'ī'.' The *Vaikhānasa-smārta-sūtra*[30] (III. 19) after prescribing a name of two or four syllables ending in a long vowel or a past participle ending in 'ta' and having a sonant etc. proceeds '(he should give) two names (of which) the nakṣatra name is the secret one; after a man consecrates the solemn Vedic fires he gets a public name (prakāśa) such as 'āhitāgni' ending in the solemn rite he may have performed.' The same sūtra (1.7) shows that in Puṇyāhavācana when requesting the brāhmaṇas to pronounce puṇyāha the man's nakṣatra name, gotra name, his father's name, a matronymic name and his own name should be repeated. Some of the gṛhyasūtras speak of a name derived from a nakṣatra. In the whole of the Vedic literature hundreds of names occur, but there is hardly any name of a teacher or well-known person derived directly from a nakṣatra. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (VI. 2. 1. 37) we are told of a person called Āṣāḍhi Sauśromateya (son of Aṣāḍha and Suśromatā) for whom the heads of unconsecrated animals were put and who on account of that mistake quickly perished. Here the name Āṣāḍhi is probably connected with the nakṣatra Aṣāḍhā. It appears therefore that in ancient times the Nakṣatra name was a secret name and so we do

29 बैजवापः। पिता नाम करोत्येकाक्षरं द्व्यक्षरं त्र्यक्षरं चतुरक्षरमपरिमितं वा कृतं कुर्यान्न तद्धितम्। ईकारान्तं स्त्रियै। अपरार्क p. 27.

30 अथ नामकरणमाचत्वारिंशाद्दिवसात्.....। दीर्घान्तमभिनिष्ठानान्तं घोषवदाद्यन्तरं द्विप्रतिष्ठितान्तस्थं मृष्टाक्षरपदस्वरं द्विवर्णं चतुर्वर्णं वा नाम शस्यते यथोक्तं मम नाम प्रथममिति गोत्रनामयुक्तं तदर्हं नाम कुर्यात्। द्वे नामनी तु नक्षत्रनाम रहस्यमग्न्याधानात् परमाहिताग्न्यादि स्वकर्मान्तं प्रकाशं नाम भवेत्। वैखानसस्मार्तसूत्र III. 19. The printed text is rather corrupt.

not find it mentioned in most of the Vedic texts. Gradually however names derived from nakṣatras became very common and ceased to be used as secret names. We find that for several centuries preceding the Christian era, names derived from nakṣatras were very prominent. Pāṇini (who cannot be placed later than 320 B.C. and may be several centuries earlier still) gives some elaborate rules about names derived from nakṣatras. He says (IV. 3. 34) that names of males (and females also) are derived from Śraviṣṭhā, Phalgunī, Anurādhā, Svāti, Tiṣya, Punarvasu, Hasta, Aṣāḍhā, and Bahulā (i.e. Kṛttikā) without adding any termination in the sense of 'born on'. Examples would be Śraviṣṭhaḥ, Phalgunaḥ etc. In another rule (IV. 3. 36) he states that in forming names from Abhijit, Aśvayuk and Śatabhiṣak, the termination is optionally dropped, e.g., we shall have Śatabhiṣak, Śātabhiṣajaḥ and Śatabhiṣaḥ. By VII. 3. 18 he says the name Proṣṭhapādaḥ is derived from Proṣṭhapada. He states (in IV. 3. 37) that terminations are frequently dropped when names are formed from nakṣatras; e.g. we have both Rauhiṇaḥ and Rohiṇaḥ from Rohiṇī. In the Junāgaḍh Inscription of Rudradāman (150 A.D.), we are told that the brother-in-law of Maurya Candragupta was a Vaiśya named Puṣyagupta (*EI.*, vol. VIII, p. 43). This is a name derived from the nakṣatra Puṣya and used in the 4th century B.C. We know that the founder of the Suṅga dynasty was Senāpati Puṣyamitra (*EI.*, vol. XX, p. 54). The *Mālavikāgnimitra* also mentions him and so does Patañjali on Pāṇini III. 2. 123. His name also is derived from Puṣya. This is not the place to go into the interesting question of the formation of Buddhist names. But a few examples of Buddhist names derived from nakṣatras will be interesting. We have the well-known name of Moggaliputta Tissa (from Tiṣya) in which a gotra name and nakṣatra name are both combined. A parivrājaka Poṭṭhapāda (Proṣṭhapāda) occurs in *Digha* I. p. 187 and III. p. 1. In the Sāñci Inscriptions of the 3rd century B.C. (*E.I.*, vol. II, p. 95) we have

such names as Asāḍa (from Aṣāḍhā), Phaguna (from Phalgunī), Svātiguta (Svātigupta), Pusarakhita (Puṣyarakṣita). In the Karle Inscription there is Sātimita (Svātimitra) from Sopara (*E.I.*, vol. VII, p.54) and a nun Asāḍhamitā (p. 56): In the Sarnāth Inscription of Kaniṣka's time there is a Bhikṣu called Puṣyavṛddhi. In the Palitana Plate of Dhruvasena I dated (Valabhi) Saṃvat 210 (about 529 A.D.) there is a brāhmaṇa named Viśākha. In the plates of Śivarāja dated (Gupta Saṃvat) 283 (i.e. 602-3 A.D.) we find such names as Puṣyasvāmī, Rohiṇisvāmī, Jyeṣṭhasvāmī and Revatisvāmī (*EI*, vol. IX, p. 288). The Ājñapti of Cārudevī, queen of Pallava Vijayabuddha-Varman was Rohiṇigupta (*E.I.*, vol. VIII, p. 146). It is not necessary to adduce more examples.

Another rule stated about Abhivādanīya names was that they should be derived from deities. From the times of the *Tai. S.* (IV. 4. 10. 1-3) different presiding deities had been assigned to the nakṣatras from Kṛttikā (such as Agni, Prajāpati, Soma, Rudra etc. for Kṛttikā, Rohiṇī, Mṛgaśīrṣa, Ārdrā etc.). When it was said that the name should be derived from a deity, what was understood according to the commentators was a name derived from the presiding deity of the nakṣatra on which a man was born (e.g. Āgneya for one who was born on Kṛttikā). In modern times we find people named after the names of deities (e.g. such as Viṣṇu, Śiva, Śaṅkara etc.). But ancient works do not show that that was the usage then. In the Vedic literature we hardly find any individual name which is the same as the names of the Vedic gods, Mitra, Indra, Pūṣan, etc. We no doubt find from the *Tai. Up.* III. 1. that Bhṛgu learnt Bhārgavī Vāruṇī vidyā from his father who was named Varuṇa. But this is a solitary instance. So also we have such names as Indrota (protected by Indra) and Indradyumna (both cited above); but we have in the Vedic literature no human being who is named Indra. In the *Praśna Up.* (I. 1.) there is a Sauryāyaṇī Gārgyā, whose first name is derived from Sūrya. Gṛhyasūtras like the Mānava (note

24) prohibited the giving of the names of deities to human beings directly. When the practice of giving the names of gods to human beings arose it is difficult to say. It is clear however that it could not have been much earlier than the first few centuries of the Christian era. We have historic examples from the 5th century onwards where persons bore the same names as gods; e.g. in the Eran stone pillar inscription of Budhagupta of Gupta Saṃvat 165 (484-5 A.D.) there is a brāhmaṇa Indraviṣṇu, son of Varuṇa-Viṣṇu, son of Hari-Viṣṇu.

There is also another way of deriving names from Nakṣatras. In some of the mediæval Jyotiṣa works, each of the 27 nakṣatras is divided into four pādas and to each pāda of a nakṣatra a specific letter is assigned (e.g. cū, ce, co, and lā for the four *pādas* of Aśvinī) from which a person born in a particular pāda of Aśvinī was called either Cūdāmaṇi, Cediśa, Coleśa, Lakṣmaṇa. Even so late a work as the *Dharmasindhu* (1790 A.D.) disapproves of such names, as not warranted by Śruti. These names are called nakṣatra-nāma; they are secret and muttered into the ear of the brahmacāri at his Upanayana even now.

Manu omits all these elaborate rules about giving a name in the case of males, makes no reference to the nakṣatra name or abhivādaniya name given to a boy, but gives two simple rules (II. 31-32) viz. that the name of a brāhmaṇa should be indicative of maṅgala, of a Kṣatriya strength, of a Vaiśya wealth and of Śudra lowness (or contempt) and that to the name of a brāhmaṇa an upapada (addition) should be joined indicating śarman (happiness or blessing), of a king an upapada connected with protection, of a vaiśya indicating prosperity and of a śūdra indicating dependence or service. We find that the Gṛhyasūtras (except *Pāraskaragṛhya*) are silent about these upapadas added after the names of individuals of the four varṇas. Therefore it may be inferred that this practice had come into vogue only sometime before the extant Manu and long after the older

gṛhya-sutras. Even among the Buddhists we find names ending in Śarman: e.g. in the Amarāvati Buddhist sculptures the word 'Mugudasamaputasa' (Mukundaśarma-putrasya) occurs (*Arch. S. of S. I.*, vol. I, p. 103). The rule of Manu was not universally observed but there were frequent breaches. In the Udayagiri cave inscription of Candragupta II dated (Gupta Saṃvat) 82 (401-2 A.D.) there is a Mahārāja Viṣṇudāsa (*Gupta Inscriptions*, p. 21). In *EI.*, vol. X, p. 71 (of 436 A.D.) we have a Viṣṇupālitabhaṭṭa (a Brāhmaṇa whose name ends in Pālita as that of a Vaiśya should). We find that 'Vadhana' (Vardhana) is added to the names of Śaka kings (*Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, vol. II, p. 16). Brāhmaṇa names ending in bhūti (which should be the upapada of Vaiśyas) and dāsa are found in *EI.*, vol. XIX, pp. 248-49. In the Sabhāparva (30. 13) both Śarmakas and Varmakas are described as Kṣatriya tribes. On the other hand in the Talguṇḍa Inscription of the Kadamba King Kākustha-varman (*EI.*, vol. VIII, p. 24) we find that the original founder of the family was a brāhmaṇa Mayūraśarman, while his son and great-grandson who had become kings had 'varman' affixed to their names (viz. Kaṅgavarman and Kākusthavarman).

A few words may be said about matronymics. In the first place they are not at all so many nor so frequent as the other names. They were probably mentioned to show the high or pure descent of the persons so described on their mother's sides also. Vaśiṣṭha (III. 19) in enumerating those who are *paṅktipāvanas* mentions one whose ten ancestors in the father's and mother's families were śrotriyas. Similarly Yājñavalkya (I. 54) lays down that the wife should be selected from a big family of *śrotriyas* who have been famous for ten generations. In the Nasik Inscription No. 2 (*EI.*, vol. VIII, p. 60) Siri Puḷumāyi is described as Vāsiṭhiputa. Similarly the Ābhīra King Īśvarasena is described as Māḍhariputra (*EI.*, vol. VIII, p. 88). Here the mother's gotra names are probably

specially emphasized to show that though the paternal side may not be of the bluest Aryan blood, the mothers were of the best Aryan families. In the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa Inscription (*EI.*, vol. XX, p. 6) Siri Virapurisa is said to be Mādharīpura and his father Siri Chāntamūla is said to be Vāsiṭhīputa. We find comparatively late writers describing the gotra of their mother's family; e.g. Bhavabhūti says that he was a Kāśyapa while his mother was a Jātūkarṇi. We learn from a kārikā in the *Mahābhāṣya* that the great grammarian Pāṇini was styled Dākṣīputra.[31]

In some of the later smṛtis names derived from the presiding deities of the twelve months of the year are prescribed. The *Laghu-Āśvalāyana smṛti* (published by the Ānandāśrama Press, Poona) prescribes (VI. 2-3) three names, one derived from the pāda of the nakṣatra on which one is born and so called 'Janmanāma', another called Saṃvyāvahārika (i.e. in ordinary use) which may be the same as the child's paternal grandfather's and a third name derived from the presiding deities of the months beginning with Mārgaśirsa. The *Śaunaka Kārikās* (ms. in the Bombay University Library) quotes Garga to the effect that a name derived from the month of birth should be given and says that Kṛṣṇa, Ananta, Acyuta, Cakri, Vaikuṇṭha, Janārdana, Upendra, Yajñapuruṣa, Vāsudeva, Hari, Yogiśa, Puṇḍarikākṣa, are respectively the names of the twelve months (*Cāndra*) of the year (from Mārgaśirṣa). The *Nirṇayasindhu* quotes this verse and says that according to the *Madanaratna* these names are meant for months beginning with Mārgaśirṣa or Caitra. These names are being given to this day in various parts but not necessarily in accordance with the month of birth.

31 सर्वे सर्वपदादेशा दाक्षीपुत्रस्य पाणिनेः । महाभाष्य on पाणिनि I. 1. 20 (vol. I, p. 75). Pāṇini is also called शालातुरीय । Vide भामह's काव्यालंकार VI 62, 'शालातुरीयमतमेतदनुकमेण' and the Nogawa plate of ध्रुवसेन II (Gupta 320 i.e. 649-50 A.D.) where the name occurs राज्यसालातुरीयतन्त्रयोरुभयोरपि निष्णातः (*EI.*, vol. VIII at p. 192) पाणिनि (IV. 3. 94) derives the word.

Résumé

The above discussion may be summarised thus:

(1) In the times of the *Ṛgveda* and *Tai. S.* usually two names were given to a person, one of which was a secret name (vide note 7 above); but the *Ṛgveda* was not unacquainted with even three or four names for a person (vide notes 1 and 3).

(2) Throughout the Vedic literature, the names given to a person were his own secular name and one or more other names derived either from his father's or grandfather's name, or from his gotra or from a locality or from the name of his mother. The *Śatapatha* speaks of giving even a third name, but how it was to be formed is not stated. Most of the names of authors whose views are mentioned by such an ancient work as Yāska's *Nirukta* are either gotra names or patronymics e.g. Āgrāyaṇa, Aupamanyava, Audumbarāyaṇa, Kautsa, Gārgya, Maudgalya, Vārṣyāyaṇi, Śākaṭāyana, Śākalya, Sthaulāṣṭhīvi, though a few like Carmaśiras and Śākapūṇi are probably individual names.

(3) It is not quite clear from the Vedic literature how the secret name was given. Hardly any secret name except that of Indra as Arjuna is known as given to any person in the Vedic literature. It is natural that the names being secret do not appear in the texts.

(4) All the Gṛhyasūtras (except *Baijavāpa*) insist on the name given to a boy being one containing an even number of syllables, usually two or four, though even six syllables or eight are allowed by a few sūtrakāras. This rule is deduced from the Vedic usage. Most of the names in the Vedic literature contain either two syllables (like Baka, Trita, Kutsa, Bhṛgu) or four (like Trasadasyu, Purukutsa,

Medhyātithi, Brahmadatta, Satyakāma), though names of three syllables (like Cyavana, Kavaṣa, Bharata) or five syllables (Nābhānediṣṭha, Hiraṇyastūpa) are not wanting.

(5) Most of the sūtras recommend that the names should begin with a sonant and contain in the middle a semi-vowel. That this is a very ancient rule follows from the fact that even Patañjali (about 140 B.C.) in his *Mahābhāṣya*[32] (ed. by Kielhorn vol. I, p. 4) mentions the rule that 'the father should bestow on the son on a day after the 10th from birth a name having a sonant at the beginning, a semi-vowel in the middle, (a name) the first syllable of which is not long, or which shows the descent from one of the three male ancestors (of the father) and which is not borne by the adversary (of the father).'

(6) Some Sūtras (vide notes 16 and 23) prescribe that the name should end in a visarga or a long vowel. This rule is probably deduced from such names as Sudās, Dīrghatamas, Pṛthuśravas (occurring even in the *Ṛgveda*), and such names as Vatsapri Bhālandana (*Tai. S.*, V. 2. 1. 6).

(7) Some gṛhya-sūtras like *Āpastamba* say that the name should have two parts the first being a noun and the second being a derivative from a verb (generally a past passive participle ending in 'ta'). This rule is derived from such ancient names as Brahmadatta (which occurs in the *Br. Up.*, I. 3. 24 and which figures very much in ancient Pāli Buddhist works), Devadatta and Yajñadatta

32 यास्त्रिकाः पठन्ति। दशम्युत्तरकालं पुत्रस्य नाम विदध्याद्घोषवदाद्यन्तरन्तःस्थमवृद्धं त्रिपुरुषानुकम्पनरिप्रतिष्ठितं तद्धि प्रतिष्ठिततमं भवति द्व्यक्षरं चतुरक्षरं वा नाम कृतं कुर्यान्न तद्धितमिति। महाभाष्य Vol. I. p. 4. अनूक means 'descent, family. कैयट explains it as 'पिता तस्य ये त्रयः पुरुषाः ताननु कायति अभिधत्ते'.

(which figure very frequently in the *Mahābhāṣya*,[33] *Śabarabhāṣya* as the stock names of persons).

(8) Most are agreed that a secret name is to be given to the boy by the parents (notes 13, 15, 18, 19) according to some at birth (notes 18, 19), according to others at the time of Nāmakaraṇa on the 10th or 12th day after birth (note 21).

(9) There is some divergence of opinion as to the secret name among the sūtrakāras. Āśvalāyana appears to prescribe that the name with a sonant at the beginning etc. is to be one known to all and the parents have to find out at the same time a secret name which the boy is to use at the time of upanayana for respectful salutation; while the *Śāṅkhāyanagṛhya* prescribes that the ordinary name (which is required to be only pleasing to brāhmaṇas) is to be given on the 10th day, while the secret name is to be given at the time of birth and is to have all the characteristic details of being 'ghoṣavadādi' etc. There is a further difference of views. *Hiraṇyakeśigṛhya*, *Baudhāyanagṛhyaśeṣasūtra* and *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* prescribe that the nakṣatra name is to be the secret one (notes 21, 27, 30), while others like the *Khādira-gṛhya* speak of a secret name but do not connect it with nakṣatras. There is a further difficulty. Several gṛhyasūtras like *Gobhila*, *Khādira* require that there should be an abhivādanīya name (notes 17, 20). This is an ancient practice. But these say that the Abhivādanīya was to be derived from a

33 Vide महाभाष्य vol. I. p. 38. लोके तावन्मातापितरौ पुत्रस्य जातस्य संवृतेऽवकाशे नाम कुर्वाते देवदत्तो यज्ञदत्त इति। तयोरुपचारादन्येपि जानन्तीयमस्य संज्ञेति। This shows that in Patañjali's time the ordinary name was given immediately on birth and that was the vyāvahārika name.

nakṣatra or a deity and *Gobhila* adds that according to some the *abhivādanīya* name should be derived from the gotra. This latter is supported by the usage of the Upaniṣads. When the abhivādanīya was a gotra name there could have been no secrecy about it.

(10) The name derived from a deity was originally derived from the deity presiding over the nakṣatra of birth. Later on the names of gods were directly used as the names of individuals, though this appears to have been originally forbidden.

(11) The upapadas śarman, varman, gupta, dāsa were added at a later date than most of the gṛhyasūtras.

(12) Some later smṛtis prescribe names derived from the names Kṛṣṇa, Ananta etc. given to the twelve months.

(13) The names of girls were to contain an odd number of syllables, generally three; and were to end in a long letter either 'ā' according to some and 'ī' according to others. Some said that it should end in 'dā',

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